

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully submit this Amendment in response to an Office Action mailed by the USPTO on April 23, 2003. Claim 2 has been amended, and claims 1 and 3-7 have been canceled by this amendment. Thus, upon entry of this amendment, claim 2 will be pending in the present application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as failing to illustrate the welding, bonding and clamping recited in claims 3-5. Applicants' cancellation of claims 3-7 obviates that objection.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has also objected to the written description, as amended, as being contradictory. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to the written description set forth herein addresses the Examiner's objection. Consequently, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's objection to the written description has been overcome, and request withdrawal of that objection.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has also rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to claim 2 and cancellation of claims 1 and 3-7 set forth herein address the Examiner's rejection. Thus, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejection of 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is obviated, and request withdrawal of that rejection.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has also rejected claims 1, 3, 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,406,746 to Abildgaard. Applicants respectfully submit that cancellation of claims 1 and 3-7 obviated that rejection. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of that rejection.

Finally, in the Office Action, the Examiner has stated that claims 2, 5 and 6 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to claim 2 set forth herein addresses the Examiner's rejection of that claim under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Thus, applicants further respectfully submit that claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully submit that this amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action, and that all claims pending in the present application, i.e., claim 2, is patentable over the prior art of record and is thus in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests entry of this amendment, as it places the application in condition for allowance. See, e.g., 37 CFR 1.116 and MPEP 714.12.

Applicant hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge the fees necessary in connection with this Amendment, including the fees required for applicants' requested extension of time, and any other fees necessary in connection with this application, to Deposit Account Number 02-1666.

Application Serial No.: 09 026
Amendment Dated July 23, 2003
Reply To Office Action of April 23, 2003

Any questions concerning this application or amendment may be directed to the undersigned agent of applicant.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: July 23, 2003

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